



Dennis Dunaway: a lot more to Alice than just being his bass player.

Snakes! Guillotines! Electric Chairs!

My Adventures In The Alice Cooper Group

Dennis Dunaway And Chris Hodenfield

OMNIBUS



The inside story of the early days of Alice Cooper, told by Vincent's close friend and bandmate.

You could be forgiven for thinking that Dennis Dunaway was just Alice Cooper's bassist for a few years, but you'd be wrong. In many ways, it was Dennis who conceptualised the monster that Alice Cooper became.

Prior to their 1975 dissolution, Alice Cooper was a quintet fronted by vocalist Vincent Furnier, and the Alice character Vince ultimately chose to inhabit was a construct of the five members of that original band. Dennis, meanwhile, was at Vince/Alice's side from the very beginning. They ran together on their high school track team and discovered Dali together in an art class under Mrs Sloan, the unsung educator who introduced them to the music of Bob Dylan and the artistic truism that 'When everything is screaming, nothing is screaming.' Take that, modern metal producers.

Ultimately, Dennis and Vince were close, from the very genesis of their mutual musical aspirations, and while the rest of the band were to fine-tune various aspects of Alice Cooper's trademark shtick, it was Dennis, a surrealistic visionary if ever there was one, who customarily had the vocalist's ear.

Anyway, the meat of the matter is this: crazy, preposterous, theatre of the absurd, proto-goth, prog-psych, beer-addled lunatics somehow contrive to ride dead-chicken-greased wheels to humungous, worldwide, megabucks rock stardom. Enjoy 'cubic fun' along the way. Collide with brick wall.

So what went wrong? Overwork, overindulgence, overambition. The usual suspects. Where the Cooper divorce was especially acrimonious was that it could be construed as, at best, a betrayal, and at worst, wholesale identity theft. The fiercely loyal Coopers stuck with Alice through tough times, but then he bailed, essentially smothering whatever collective legacy the band might have acquired for themselves with his own enduring and substantial individual celebrity.

There could be huge bitterness within these pages, but there isn't any. Long before Dennis and Alice were rock stars, they were friends, and it'd take a good deal more than a one-sided business decision of 40 years ago to alter that. A killer tale, thrillingly told. Love it to death.



Ian Fortnam

Slash

Live At The Roxy EAGLE ROCK

2014 show with Myles Kennedy & The Conspirators.



Live At The Roxy is one of three shows Slash played in September 2014 on Hollywood's

Sunset Strip, a mini tour that also took in the Troubadour and the Whiskey A Go Go. This set features material from Slash's solo albums, including *Ghost*, with a couple of Guns N' Roses' more possessive numbers – *Sweet Child O' Mine* and *You Could Be Mine* – as sweeteners.

Like AC/DC or Lemmy, Slash is a force of rock'n'roll nature, a silent on-stage presence not unlike wrestling's The Undertaker. Kennedy is a capable vocalist (and no mean guitarist) but genially aware he's second fiddle here.

The whole gig feels good-natured, intimate and perhaps too much of a testimony to just what well-policed, detoxified affairs gigs are these days. There's no smoking and no smokin'; no real sense of the down and dirty, or electric dangerous, or kicking over of the stacks. Not Slash's fault, of course, but *Live At The Roxy* feels closer to a recital than a riot.



David Stubbs

My Life And The Beautiful Music

Jon Hotten JONATHAN CAPE

California dreaming.



It only seems five minutes ago that Jon Hotten undertook work experience at

Kerrang! magazine as the art editor's 'lackey boy', but his timing was perfect. These were the over-the-top 1980s and *Kerrang!*'s pages were full of the big-haired, big-mouthed likes of Mötley Crüe, Poison, Van Halen... Slave Raider, even. A fertile hunting ground for any budding rock journo worth his salt.

Set in Los Angeles in 1988, *My Life And The Beautiful Music* is an off-kilter, part-autobiographical account of the hedonistic Hollywood rock scene of the time. Hotten, who broke the legendary Nikki Sixx/Matthew Trippe doppelgänger story (see p54), uses this as a springboard for all kinds of surreal musings.

Mysterious female characters – Iris, Brenna, Lana – flit in and out of the narrative, as does

a wayward photographer clearly modelled on the late, great Ray Palmer. Hotten himself cuts a curiously detached figure, as if he's observing events through a gauzy lens.

An odd book, then, but weirdly compelling all the same. And certainly a step up from

Letrasetting Krusher's headlines.

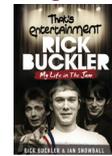


Geoff Barton

That's Entertainment: Rick Buckler - My Life In The Jam

Rick Buckler OMNIBUS PRESS

Drummer's chronicle of life alongside Weller and Foxton.



With his Daltrey-like good looks, Rick Buckler could be mistaken for the frontman of

The Jam, rather than the glumly reticent Weller. Certainly, his role in the group, laying down the drum patterns for tracks like *Funeral Pyre*, should not be underrated. He comes across in this memoir as a genial, unpretentious, if at times prosaic character. Racy rock'n'roll revelations are thin on the ground: The Jam didn't really do drugs, their paths didn't cross with other bands, though Buckler once met Boy George ("we just talked"), doing *TOTP* wasn't all it's cracked up to be.

Money matters loom large; their meagre first advance, the £2,000 he put down on his first house, while his dismay at Weller breaking up The Jam is largely down to the fact that they were about to earn some real dosh.

It's unlikely the group will reunite – Weller and Buckler haven't spoken since 1983. But there's no bitterness here.



David Stubbs

Andrew Matheson

Sick On You EBURY PUBLISHING

Rock'n'roll at its disastrous best.

Whatever the likes of *Rocky* would have you believe, no one loves a winner. It's the tales of grand ambitions gone massively, hilariously to shit that have us rooting for the poor sucker telling them.

Andrew Matheson formed proto-punks The Hollywood Brats in London in 1971, armed with a rock'n'roll manifesto. The Clash must've been eyeing up, an eye-popping wardrobe,

unlimited youthful arrogance and a genuinely exciting vision. What follows is a whirlwind of terrible decisions, squalor, violent crowds, an indifferent music industry, itchy nether infections and plenty of bickering. And it's brilliant.

It helps that Matheson is a first-class storyteller, bringing the rock scene of the day gruesomely to life and gleefully recounting his own callow youth with a mixture of disdain and admiration. Someone needs to make a film of this immediately.



Emma Johnston

Tarja Turunen

Luna Park Ride EARMUSIC

Ex-Nightwish soprano's live recordings from 2011.



The music industry may be struggling, but there's a thin line between maximising

revenue from an act and taking advantage of loyal fans. This live album features a performance from Tarja's 2011 world tour - you may well know it as it's the soundtrack to the DVD footage previously sold to you in the premium-priced 'media edition' of her 2012 live album *Act I*.

That DVD, whose content is also included here, was 'filmed by fans' - a pretty transparent way of getting cheap content, and when a fair amount of it is out of focus and shot from dodgy angles, you may prefer to stick to fan videos on YouTube.

The CD of 'bonus' material might be of slightly more interest to Nightwish/Tarja completists, but does your average punter need new live versions of *In For A Kill* or *I Walk Alone* when they're spirited enough as ever, but barely any different from live material that's already available?

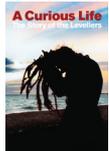


Johnny Sharp

The Levellers

A Curious Life DANDY FILMS

Stirring stuff from the folk-punk front line.



Like 'em or not, The Levellers are one of the great motive forces in British rock. Formed in

Brighton's traveller scene in the late 80s, their rousing folk-punk rumpus not only spoke for a crushed crusty counterculture but captured the imagination of the mainstream too.

Their unlikely rise and appeal is examined here, chiefly through Jeremy Cunningham, their crimson-locked bassist and creative controller, as he gathers the threads of the band's scattered archive.

With his nervous cackle echoing throughout, Cunningham and co - including his proud, scene-stealing parents - begin as Waterboys wannabes. Or, more specifically, McDermott's *Two Hours* wannabes, who needle the British music press just by their very existence and lead to Cunningham sending the *NME* a turd in a box after another particularly snide review.

With the zeitgeist on their side, they achieved a consecutive run of seven gold albums and a Glasto headline - all despite the usual band tensions, desperate addictions and calling Michael Eavis a cunt.

A good story, well told - respect is due all round.



Jo Kendall

The Who

Live At Shea Stadium 1982

EAGLE ROCK

Shepherd's Bush entertainment from the decade that style overlooked.



Daltrey does his mic-flinging acrobatics in a shiny Le Bon suit. Townshend's windmills are

inhibited by striped balloon pants. Watching The Who decked out in the trappings of a New Romantic scene they had precious little affinity with at Shea Stadium in 1982, supporting their 10th album, *It's Hard*, is disconcerting; they're a band painfully out of time.

They knew it too - this was the first of many farewell tours - but only the synth-funk chant of *Eminence Front* and Entwistle's Genesis-y *Dangerous* sound dated. Like hashish and Bruce Forsyth, the eternal whip-crack of *Pinball Wizard*, *Who Are You* (dedicated to "all the people in our dressing room") and *Won't Get Fooled Again* resonate in any era, and *Baba O'Reilly*, *Love Reign O'er Me* and *See Me Feel Me* tingled the spine of Shea 1982 as powerfully as they will Glastonbury 2015. They even close with a couple of Beatles tunes, in tribute to the venue. Timeless, in spite of the wardrobe dept.



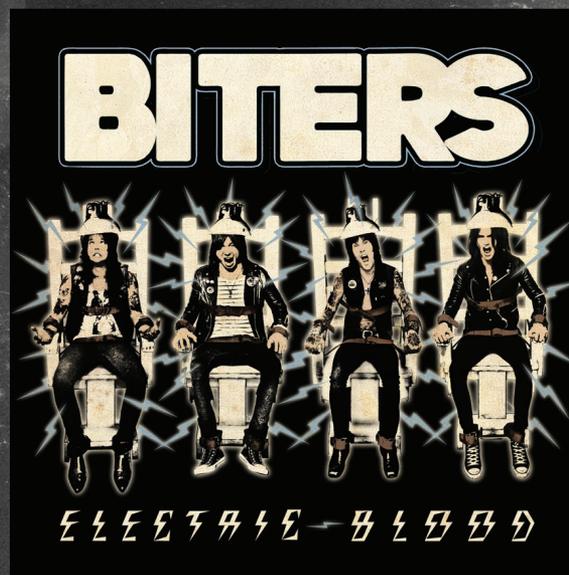
Mark Beaumont

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